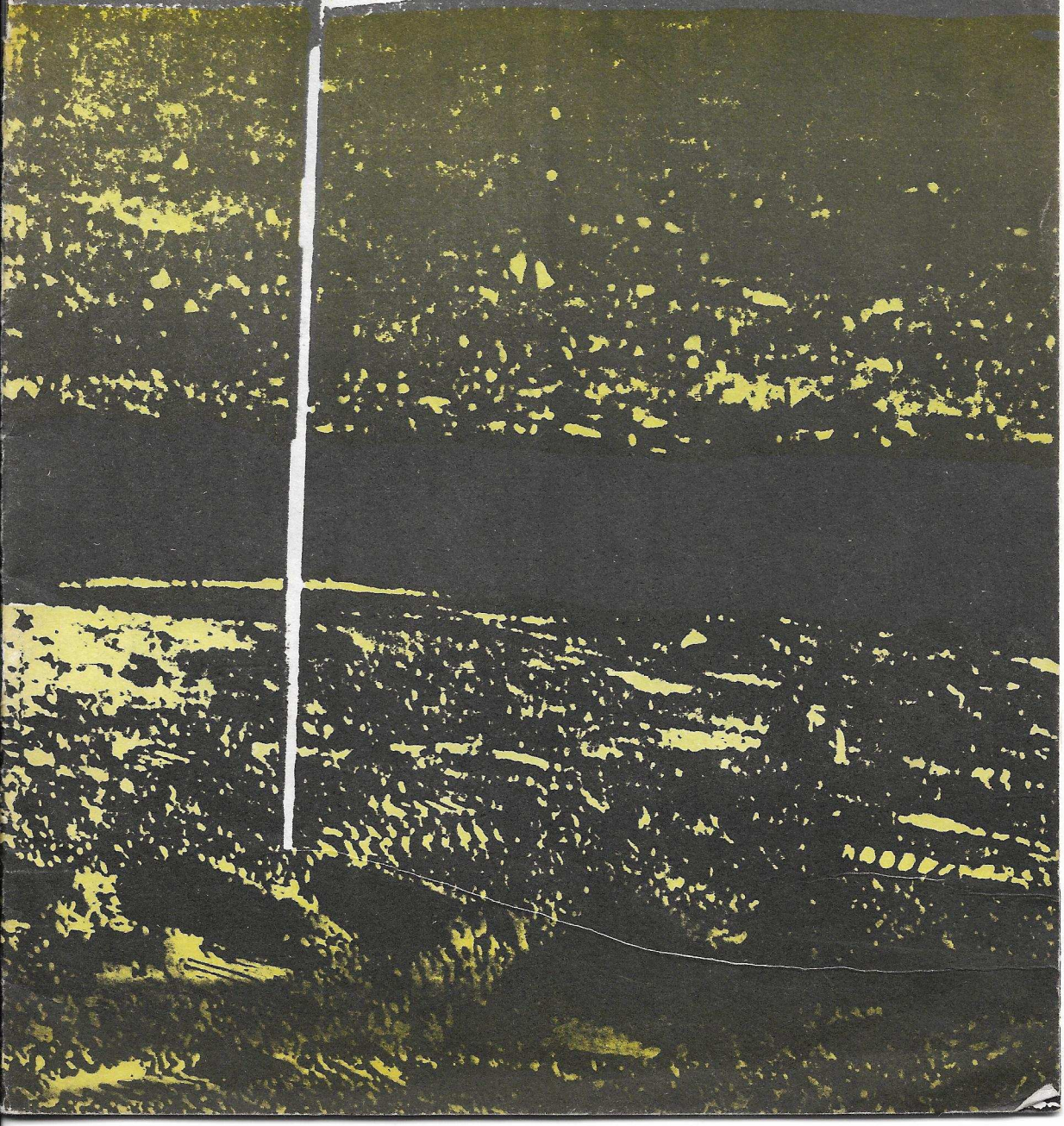
SCI-CON 70

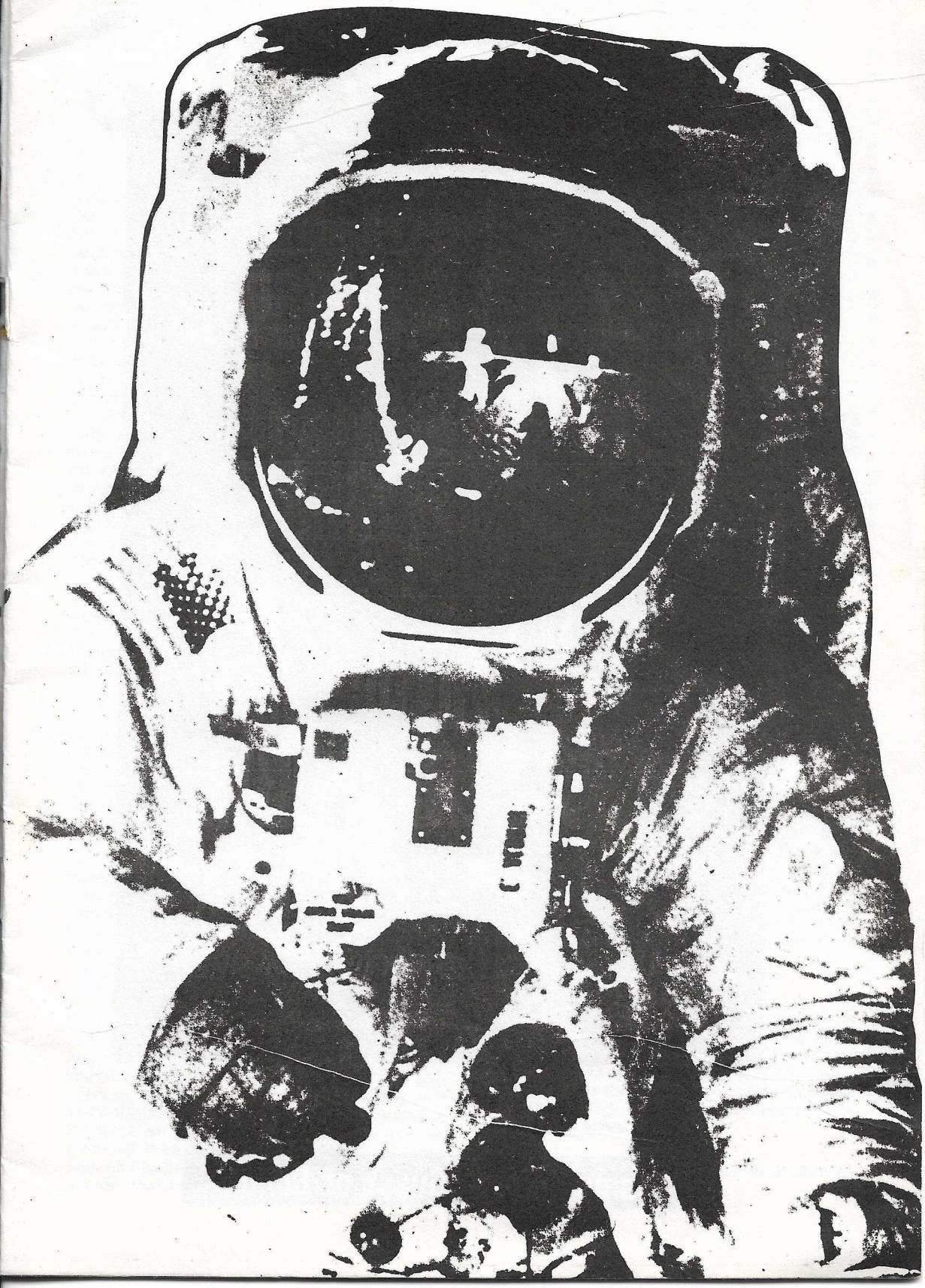
PROGRAMME BOOKLET



UNCLASSIFIED as of 27th March 1970 . . .

As Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon, he smelled a sweet pungent odour, and observed an elderly gentlemen in doublet and hose. On Armstrong's expressing some surprise and enquiry, his welcomer said "I am the spectre of those who have said for so long that science fiction is not for real." He then vanished, with a faint, musical twang.

AND GOOD RIDDANCE !



James Blish: Guest of Honour

G·O·H

Over and above our pleasure at announcing that James Blish has consented to be our Guest of Honour at this Convention, there is another reason why his appearance here would seem particularly apposite. His seniority in the field goes without saying; what is sometimes overlooked is that this leadership stems, not simply from his ability as a wordsmith, but from the peculiar involvement he has always had with both the practical and the moral issues with which science-fiction is increasingly concerned. The field is not lacking in writers bristling with technical expertise, not in those only too willing to deliver some hortatory message; what it is shy of is those who operate on enough levels to have a message that is universal enough to be relevant, and who are capable of making message and story one organic whole. Men, in fact, like James Blish. And since this Convention is particularly concerned with establishing the fact that SF has come of age, and that writers and fans alike must now grapple with the responsibilities that devolve from this fact, it seems to us that we are singularly fortunate in our Guest of Honour. Indeed a man for all seasons, he is for this season particularly apt.

On a count of sheer work, he is the author of thirty-four books and more than three hundred other titles; he won the 'Hugo' award for the best SF novel of 1958, 'A Case of Conscience' – a book probably unbeaten to this day for its presentation of moral issues. As an internal worker in the field, one notes that he was one of the three founders of the Milford (Pennsylvania) Science Fiction Writers' Conference, now in its fifteenth year, and was vice-president of the Science-Fiction Writers of America in its second year, in which capacity he testified before a U.S. Senate Committee on copyright law revision.

Background? He received his B.Sc. degree in 1942 from Rutgers University, where he majored in biology, with special emphasis on limnology, the biology of shorelines. After two years in the U.S. army, where he served as a medical laboratory technician, he was a graduate assistant at Columbia University, where he switched from the sciences to literature; since then he has been a reader for a literary agency, a trade newspaper editor and a public relations counsel specialising in scientific and technical accounts – and, of course, a free-lance writer.

Lovers of fine writing will have noticed with pleasure that the works of James Branch Cabell are now becoming available from America in paperback. Well, they can thank Mr. Blish – along with a small valiant band of souls – for this; he is a leading member of the James Branch Cabell Society, and an editor of its journal, KALKI. To those who might doubt the import of this, we can only say, you have not read the works of Cabell !

It is pleasing to conclude this note by saying that our Guest of Honour is now resident in England; he and his wife, designer and illustrator Judith Ann Lawrence, live near Henly-on-Thames, and keep three cats. Your chairman, who also keeps three cats, is prepared to go on record as saying that this also means more than it might seem.

James Blish describes his hobbies as concert music and avoiding exercise.

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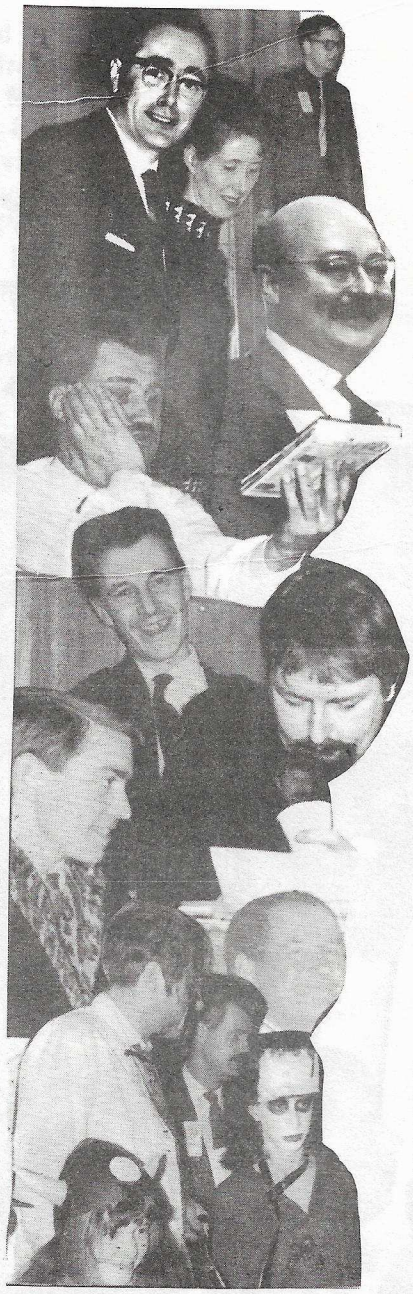

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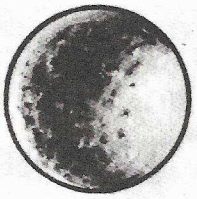
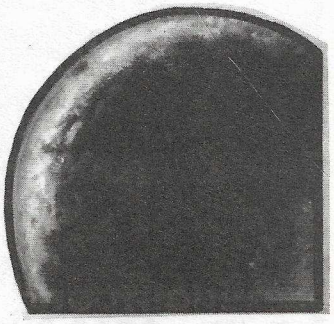




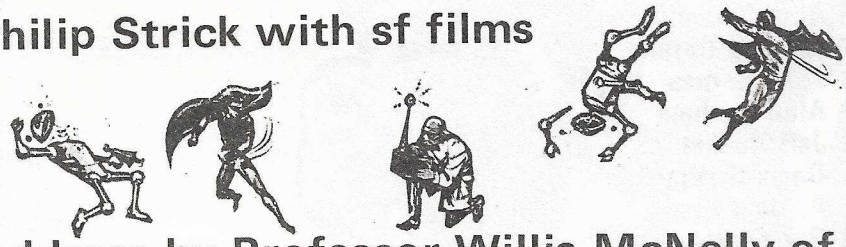
SCI-CON 70

FRIDAY, MARCH 27th

12 noon Registration Desk and BSFA Hospitality Room open

3 p.m. Chairman's Welcome

3.30 Philip Strick with sf films



5 p.m. Address by Professor Willis McNelly of the California State College

6 p.m. Meal Break

8 p.m. Film THE TRIP followed by PARTY in Con. Hall

11 p.m. Late Night Poetry – Edward Lucie-Smith

PROGRAMME

SATURDAY MARCH 28th

10 a.m. Publishers Panel

11 a.m. Kit Pedler chairs a panel on the need for a Scientific Ombudsman

12 noon Meal Break

2 p.m. Dr. John Clarke, Dept of Psychology, University of Manchester on "A Map of Inner Space", a scientific theory of mysticism

3 p.m. Speech by James Blish, Guest of Honour
Sponsored by Faber & Faber.

3.30 Dr. Chris Evans and Perry Chapdelaine on computers, with demonstration

4.30 Peter Weston, SPECULATION editor chairs a panel
followed by Meal Break

8 p.m. Fancy Dress Ball including the Fashion Parade of the Future

11 p.m. All-night film show, including "THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD", "TOPPER", "TALES OF TERROR", "NIGHT OF THE EAGLE" and cartoons

SUNDAY MARCH 29th

10.30 BSFA Annual General Meeting

11.30 Teaching Systems, Present and Future – a Multiple Image Tape/Slide Presentation by P. J. Hills of the University of Surrey
followed by Meal Break

2 p.m. Keith Albarn and Gerald Carter on "Spaceship Earth"

3 p.m. Raymond Fletcher, M.P.

3.30 Auction

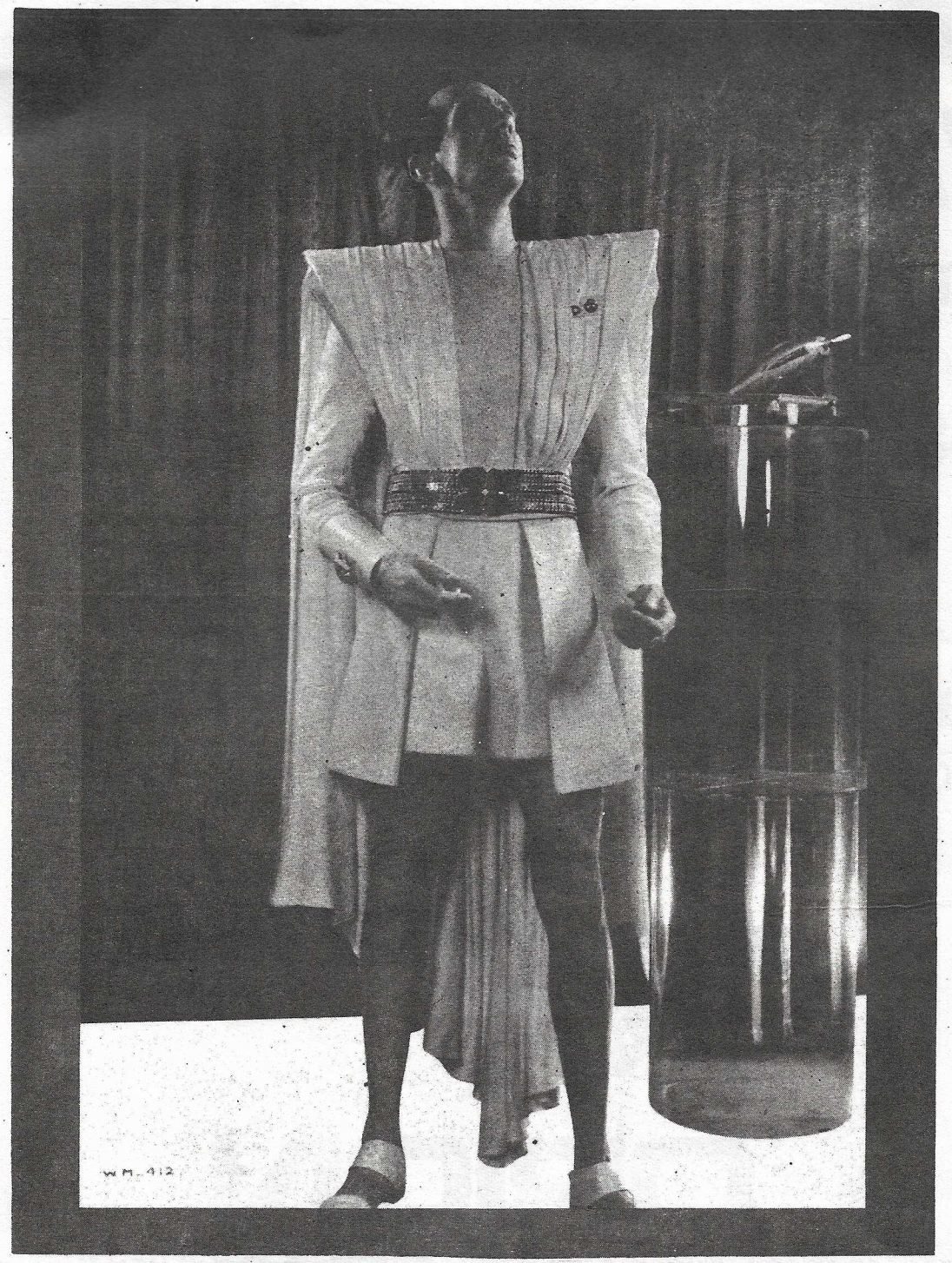
4.15 Tom Morgan, Scientologist in the Con Hall and Tolkein Society meeting in foyer

5 p.m. Panel chaired by John Brunner
followed by Meal break

8 p.m. Presentation of Doc Weir award, followed by THINGS TO COME

MONDAY MARCH 30th

10.30 Meeting of the BSFA Bibliographers



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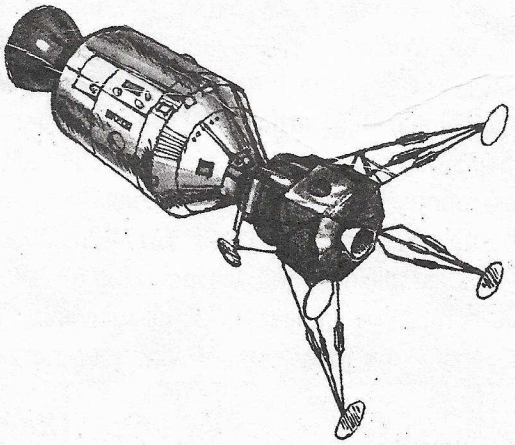

If you live in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Essex or thereabouts, come to one of our fortnightly meetings. Contact any of the following for details:

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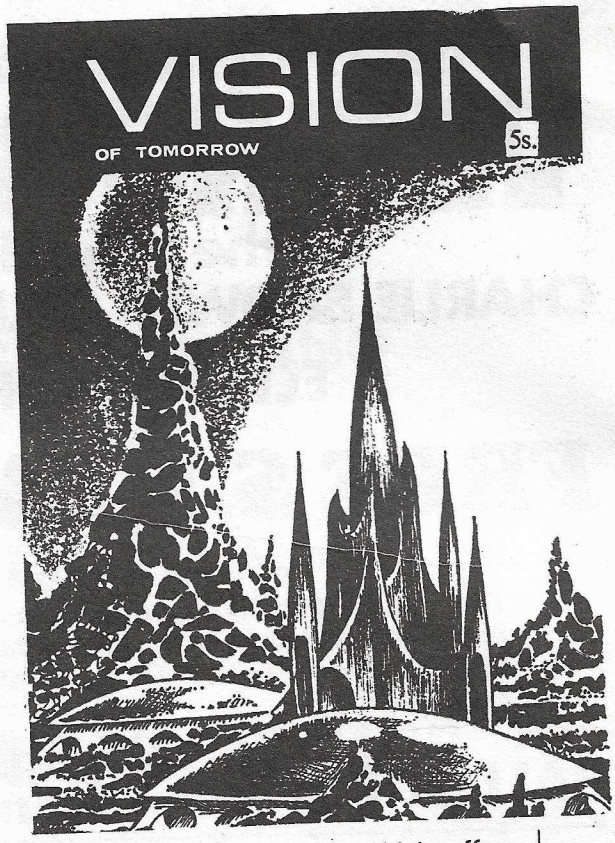

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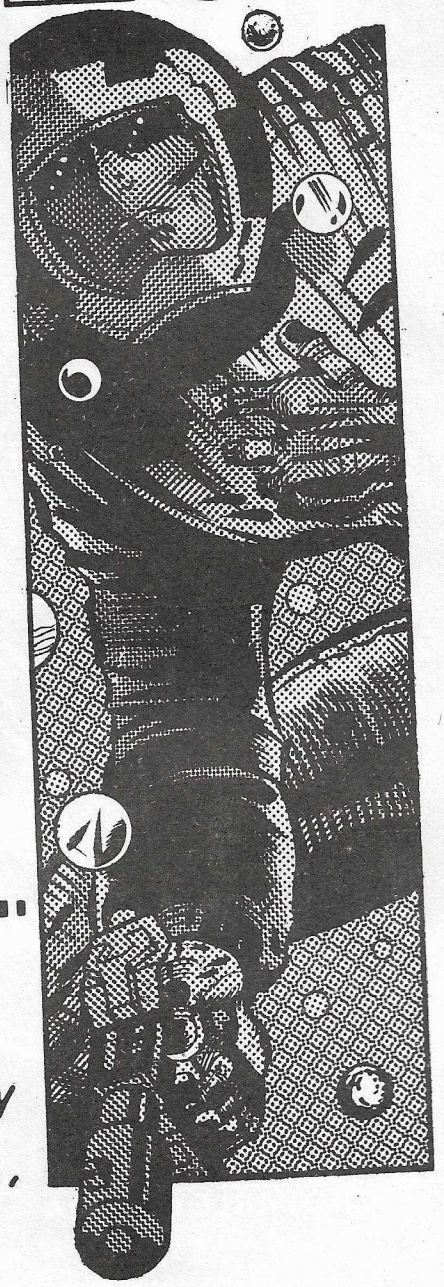

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